



**WisDOT/City of Waukesha Meeting**  
**Wednesday, September 29, 2004, 10:00am-11:30am**

People in attendance

Casey Newman, WisDOT BOP  
Dave Leucinger, WisDOT, BOP  
Aileen Switzer, WisDOT, DTD 2  
Mayor Carol Lombardi  
Jim Payne, City Administrator  
Steven Crandell, Community Development Director  
Paul Feller, Director of Public Works  
Michael Hoeft, City Planner  
Doug Kochler, City Planner

1. Overview of WisDOT's meeting purpose and WisDOT's long-range plan, *Connections 2030*, by WisDOT staff: The meeting began at 10:00, with Casey Newman giving an overview of WisDOT's long-range plan *Connections 2030*. WisDOT is seeking input on transportation planning issues from statewide stakeholder groups. *Connections 2030* is scheduled to be completed in 2006.
2. Clarification on timeline and content: Mayor Lombardi asked if the draft corridors would be available by December, as she would like to use them for two regional government meetings. She was told that a report would be released next month. She also asked about the number of corridors identified in early work on the Plan. WisDOT has identified approximately 25 regional corridors, all crossing two or more counties.
3. Gathering of input from City of Waukesha Staff: Discussion focused on the following issues:
  - a. I-94 Corridor  
Staff noted the importance of I-94 to the community, with two areas of emphasis:
    - 1) Western Access/Beltline – The recent reconstruction of the Highway G Interchange improved access to parts of Waukesha's northwestern region. However, there are still missing links to a Beltline extension around Waukesha's southern and western borders. The Highway G corridor would provide access to I-94 for shipments to and from the west. This topic is also discussed under section c.
    - 2) Additional Lanes: City staff asked if there was a timeline for adding lanes to I-94 from Highway G west to Madison. I-94 currently narrows from 6 lanes to 4 lanes west of Highway G. Development has been very strong in Delafield, Oconomowoc, and Johnson Creek. District 2 staff noted that in the current district program, through

2011, no major project is identified. There are some proposals that are being considered within the Secretary's Office. Connections 2030 identifies this corridor as one where policies towards improvement of parallel routes and modes will be considered.

b. Canadian National Rail Corridor/Freight Rail Service

Waukesha is bisected by the main line between Duluth and Chicago of the Canadian National (CN) Railway. CN acquired this line upon purchase of Wisconsin Central Limited. Through traffic of freight along this corridor has greatly increased, leading to several issues of safety and congestion:

- 1) Grade separation at Moreland Road: Moreland is a major east-west connector through Waukesha. The road currently intersects at-grade with the CN mainline at the northern edge of Downtown Waukesha. This crossing is also adjacent to the intersection with St. Paul Avenue. A consultant has been selected to prepare a detailed study for a grade separation at this location. Waukesha would like to advance this separation as a safety priority for state assistance.
- 2) Rail Access – Waukesha Electric is one of a group of businesses utilizing rail service in the southwestern part of the city. Some shippers would like to have a second rail company offer shipping access. Environmental concerns limit the interest in existing parcels along these corridors. Planners expect existing industrial parks to fill within 10 years, necessitating redevelopment of existing industrial sites for prospective businesses due to lack of other available land parcels.

c. Western Beltline

Waukesha currently has highways that form a beltline around the community to the north (I-94), east, and south (Highway 59). While a corridor around the community's west side has been officially mapped for more than 20 years, it remains incomplete. This corridor would extend north and west from the Highway 59/St. Paul intersection to join Merrill Hills Road at Sunset Drive, with an additional link between Merrill Hills Drive at Highway 18 and Meadowbrook Road at Northview Road.

The western and southwestern parts of Waukesha will be a major growth area for residential, commercial, and recreational development. Waukesha's new high school is at the far southwestern edge of the city. The city limits of Waukesha have extended to abut Delafield on the west. A major complex of soccer fields off Sunset Drive is under development; this is projected to generate numerous auto trips. The Fox Run Shopping Center at Sunset and St. Paul is already a congested location. Two new industrial parks along Highway 59 have access to I-43 to the south via Highway 164, but need better access to I-94 for shipments to the west and north. Staff noted that routes along the western part of the city are already heavily traveled, but not improved.

d. Transit Systems

Waukesha emphasized its success in providing public transportation, but also noted several challenges it faces.

- 1) The city's fixed-route system has 10 routes, covering 80% of the city (using the ¼ mile walking distance standard). Service also extends to Brookfield Square east along Bluemound Road (with a stop at the Goerke's Corners Park & Ride Lot) and north to the Waukesha County Technical College (WCTC). The Goerke's Corners stop is a transfer point to Badger Bus and Wisconsin Coach Lines service.
- 2) The city notes that the designs for Bluemound Road and the new Meadowbrook Road/I-94/Highway G Park & Ride lot are not transit-friendly.
- 3) The city is also the contract operator for public transportation in the county, including a route to Highway 83 (Delafield). The city took over as provider after the county put out an RFP; the city was chosen over Milwaukee County by demonstrating cost savings of up to \$1 million. This may be a unique arrangement within the state.
- 4) The city believes that transit connections to the Duplainville crossing will provide adequate connections to any future passenger rail service.
- 5) The city's transit system coordinated with the school district in the site choice for the new high school. Waukesha is also engaged in a pilot program to move more middle school and high school students eligible for busing from school district buses to the transit system. Students may be a significant percentage of system riders.
- 6) There may also be coordination between city paratransit service and county ride-share service, but no specifics were available.
- 7) While the city expresses revenue concerns for transit service, property taxes remain the primary local revenue source. Staff would support other considerations such as a city- or county-wide sales tax, as opposed to a more regional taxation system. However, no local discussions have occurred.

e. Cooperative Agreements

The city has border agreements with the City of Pewaukee to the north. It has contract agreements for local transit service with the Town of Brookfield and the Village of Pewaukee (for service to WCTC). No service agreements are in place for the Town of Waukesha or the Town of Genessee. Staff noted that current agreements for library service, hazmat, and the new emergency call center could serve to build rapport amongst local governmental units. Staff observed that an RTA could have benefits but that arrangements were still lacking; SEWRPC would need enabling legislation to develop such a system. Staff expressed doubts that such legislation could be enacted.

In response to a question of SEWRPC's responsiveness to local needs, staff stated that it met needs for planning, but not for funding. Waukesha expressed willingness to enter into collaborative agreements, but emphasized that it would not cede local control.

f. Aeronautics

The Waukesha County Airport (formerly known as Crites Field) is located inside city limits but operated by the county. Expansion proposals have been discussed, but are sensitive issues. First,

there is no room for expansion at present. Second, the airport is surrounded by residential development, and neighborhood impacts are a long-term concern. Any decision on expansion rests with the County Board, but the city will oppose expansion on the basis on these impacts. A study is underway on possible mitigation options.

g. Pedestrian/Bicycle Issues

Waukesha has approved a Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan and has published a map of bicycle routes. City policy is to provide sidewalks along at least one side of all streets; most neighborhoods in the city comply with this policy. Implementation of key routes is still underway; no timetable was attached to the Plan. Two locations for trail extensions are along Meadowbrook (on the far northwest side), and on the southeast side, linking to New Berlin (with the current impediment being the crossing of a 6-lane highway).